Senate
Impeachment Court
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Date: 04/08/2026 Time: 11:15 am
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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SENATE
IMPEACHMENT COURT

IN THE MATTER OF:

IMPEACHMENT TRIAL OF
VICE PRESIDENT
SARA ZIMMERMAN DUTERTE

CASE NO. 004-2026

MANIFESTATION

The Prosecution respectfully manifests that it deems it unnecessary to file a *Reply* to respondent's *Answer*, for the following reasons:

1. Under the applicable rules, the allegations and defenses in the *Answer* are deemed controverted even without a *Reply*. More fundamentally, the *Answer* raises no material factual issue that requires a responsive pleading. It does not meaningfully engage the factual allegations in the *Articles of Impeachment*, but instead concentrates on procedural, jurisdictional, and constitutional objections directed against the continuation of the proceedings.

2. This is evident across all four *Articles*, where respondent repeatedly asserts that she committed no impeachable offense. Yet beyond these general denials, the *Answer* offers no coherent factual narrative that directly refutes the charges set forth in the *Articles of Impeachment*.

> **Article I:** Respondent disputes the legal significance of the allegations on confidential funds, but does not explain how such funds were actually utilized.
>
> **Article II:** Respondent challenges the sufficiency of the allegations on unexplained wealth, financial transactions, and the Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth, but does not provide a factual accounting or her own explanation of the transactions,

nor does she allege the true value or extent of her assets or wealth.

Article III: Respondent characterizes the bribery allegations as speculative and unsupported, but does not set out her own version of the events.

Article IV: Respondent rejects the legal characterization of the allegations involving threats and related acts, but does not directly address the factual assertions underlying the charge.

3. In substance, therefore, the *Answer* does not function as a genuine response to the charges, but as an attempt to secure the outright dismissal of the impeachment case on threshold constitutional and procedural grounds. Such summary relief is not contemplated under the Constitution or the Senate Rules of Procedure on Impeachment Trials, which require that impeachment proceed to trial and be resolved only by conviction or acquittal after full hearing. By seeking a disposition outside this framework, the *Answer* attempts to ventilate matters that properly belong to the trial proper.

4. Moreover, the procedural objections raised in the *Answer* pertain to the manner by which the House of Representatives initiated the impeachment proceedings. These issues are, by respondent's own admission, already the subject of a pending *Petition for Certiorari and Prohibition* before the Supreme Court, which the *Answer* expressly adopts and repleads. To the extent that these matters have been elevated for judicial determination, the Senate, sitting as an Impeachment Court, cannot be placed in the position of reviewing or pre-empting issues currently pending before the Supreme Court.

5. At the same time, these objections go into the very core of the House's exclusive power to initiate impeachment proceedings. This power cannot be subjected to review, revision, or nullification by the Senate acting as an Impeachment Court, without effectively disturbing the constitutional allocation of powers between the two Houses of Congress. To entertain such issues at this stage would, in effect, convert the Senate into an appellate reviewing authority over a constitutionally independent act of initiation by the House.

6. In view of the foregoing, the Prosecution shall dispense with the filing of a *Reply*. The issues are now properly joined under the applicable rules, and no useful purpose will be served by any further exchange of pleadings. At this stage, further paper submissions serve only to delay what the Constitution already requires: the immediate commencement of the trial.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED.

Quezon City for Pasay City, June 5, 2026.

THE PUBLIC PROSECUTORS
FOR THE IMPEACHMENT CASE AGAINST
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